



PTSD in Asian and Pacific Islanders: Veterans and Families 3 Written Video Transcript

At first after I got out in 1952, I didn't want to talk about any combat. I thought [0:07] was (the worst thing), you know. You have to come up with it to speak up and tell your problems. Men of this Japan [00:00.20.00] American they don't want to come to get help. The (benefits) are there, you know. So, I don't know, even for myself it took me that long. [laughs]

We gathered a small group of Asian-American and Pacific Islander veterans from the VA's [00:00.40.00] San Jose outpatient clinic to share their experiences involving themselves and their families.

What when I first was diagnosed as PTSD I had all those pamphlets explained everything. I brought it home, let them read it. You know, let them read the pamphlet that explains everything, the symptoms and all how to help me if it need because it said so in black and white.

I sit down with my wife. I apologized for the abusive thing I did to them, to my kids and to my wife. I apologized to them. I told them I didn't know, [00:01.20.00] you know, I just lost it. My kids they read it too and they start to understand what I was going through. It was painful for me to apologize to them because they are my kids but they deserve better.

As my kids start growing up I used to be so bossy and so strict [00:01.40.00] and everything. Then now they're grown up and they kind of remind me, says, "Dad, you know you used to act real weird when you first came back. But now we understand what PTSD is, you know." And we talk about it. And they say, "You're a changed person too." You know, I'm more mellow [00:02.00.00] now than I used to be as I got older.

Since I've been here and been treated with medication I'm kind of a new person. And I explain that to my doctor about feeling this certain way where tomorrow wasn't important until tomorrow showed up. And so [00:02.20.00] he explained it very simply to me was that in the past you were able to see the roses, however now you're taking the time to smell the roses.

I was rambunctious, nobody could talk to me and I was always aggressive. Everywhere I go even at work, somebody say a [00:02.40.00] wrong thing to me I ready blow up. But now with the treatment here my wife sees the difference for me and she appreciate me now.



My wife likes the new me because I don't tell her we're leaving at 6:30 and I'm pressing [00:03.00.00] on the horn in the driveway at 6:30. You know, I allow her the time to just be ready whether she's late or not, you know, that's fine. And so there's a big change come over me. So, it's family plays a really key role in just getting involved.

The veterans and family members [00:03.20.00] featured in this video shared their thoughts and memories with you in the hope that you might benefit from their experiences. Some of the main points that we heard were, your family has an important role in helping you as a veteran heal the wounds from PTSD. During treatment you may see a counselor for individual sessions [00:03.40.00] and get extra support and guidance. Your therapist may recommend a full assessment to see if medication may help relieve some of your symptoms such as anxiety, depression or sleep problems. Your counselor will probably want to refer you for a physical exam. You may also be invited to join group sessions [00:04.00.00] with other veterans going through similar issues.

Don't give up. That person that you knew that you loved is still there. There's just all these other sort of disguises, if you will, that are defense mechanisms to really protect himself. And sometimes—or herself—[00:04.20.00] sometimes also somewhat distorted, thinking they're protecting the family.

They're out to help you, so go ahead.

Talk to these people and say, [00:04.40.00] I need the help because (and cure get help).

The war's over, go home. And accept the fact there is something wrong with us.
[00:05.00.00]

The great scientist, Albert Einstein, once said, "Nothing happens until something moves." You've begun the process, you've begun to move. We congratulate you for taking a step toward improving the quality of your life and finding out more about PTSD.
[00:05.20.00] Just like the other veterans you met today you may also see wonderful changes in yourself but it's going to take work, effort and time on your part. The VA medical centers, vet centers and other organizations are available to help you get the care you need. [00:05.40.00]

I hope you have found this video to be informative and useful. As you can see, the Department of Veteran's Affairs is working to increase care providers' understanding of veterans and their cultural [00:06.00.00] backgrounds. This information helps Asian-American and Pacific Islander veterans and their families better deal with post-traumatic stress. I served as an Army soldier during World War II and I now have the honor of serving as the chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. My experiences [00:06.20.00] have taught me that the collective backgrounds and talents of our military men and women are a powerful advantage for our country. America's diversity is one of its greatest strengths. Although Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders fortify our defense system [00:06.40.00] they face unique challenges as members of our



armed forces. As we have heard from the interviews in this video, looking like the enemy is one of many factors contributing to the post-traumatic stress of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islander who fought in war zones. [00:07.00.00] Families play an essential role in the healing process, and their interest and involvement with the VA services are an important part of the veteran's recovery. Together, a veteran and his or her loved ones can take steps towards regaining a healthy, happy and satisfying life of family. [00:07.20.00] So, thank you for joining us today and for caring for our nation's veterans.

[end of audio]

